

# **An Argument for Marriage**

By a High School Senior

Have you ever stopped to think about whose rights are being violated by forbidding homosexual couples to marry? No constitution in the U.S. has ever granted the courts the right to make huge, comprehensive decisions in the law to change society. Regardless of their opinion of homosexual marriage, every American who believes in democracy should be outraged that the Senate would take it upon themselves to make such a change in society without option to democratic process.

Marriage was originally denied to black people in the early decades of the United States as a means of social control. It is now being used to deny the humanity of an entire class of people.

These statements summarize the most often heard arguments against treating same-sex couples as full and equal citizens.

The legal definition of marriage: A **marriage** is a committed relationship between or among individuals, recognized by civil authority and/or bound by the religious beliefs of the participants. Basically marriage consists of a piece of paper (marriage certificate) authorized by a City or Town or State in order for that City, Town or State to collect fees. That's it.

A church marriage is a religious ceremony which is not recognized by the City, Town or State unless registered. A marriage in the eyes of God is not recognized by any of the States without proper paperwork, and a same-sex marriage in Massachusetts with proper paperwork is not recognized by Conservative Christians. Very interesting.

## **Marriage is designed for procreation.**

Many opposite-sex couples choose not to, or are not able to, procreate, yet they're still allowed to marry. Gay men and lesbians can, and often do, bear children. Many same-sex couples jointly care for their children. They also can foster parent and adopt children.

## **A one-man, one-woman marriage is best for children.**

That's interesting, in light of whom society does allow to get married and bring children into their marriage. Check it out: murderers, convicted felons of all sorts, even child molesters are all allowed to freely marry and procreate, and do so every day, with hardly a second thought by the same critics. So, if children are truly the priority here, why is this allowed? The fact is that many gay couples raise children, adopted and their own from failed attempts at heterosexual marriages. Several scientific studies have shown that the outcomes of the children raised in the homes of gay and lesbian couples are just as good as those of straight couples, if not better, because most children who grow up with same-sex parents are much less judgmental towards others. What makes the difference is the love of two parents, not their gender. Homosexuals are just as capable of loving children as fully as anyone else.

## **Gay relationships are immoral.**

Says who? Jesus certainly never uttered one word against homosexuals. Doesn't freedom of religion imply the right to freedom from religion as well? The Bible has absolutely no standing in American law and because it doesn't, no one has the right to impose rules on anyone else simply because of something they perceive to be mandated by the Bible. Not all world religions have a problem with homosexuality; many sects of

Buddhism, for example, celebrate gay relationships freely and would like to have the authority to make them legal marriages. In that sense, a Buddhists' religious freedom is being infringed. If one believes in religious freedom, the recognition that resistance to gay marriage is based on religious arguments is reason enough to discount this argument completely.

### **Gay men and Lesbians are sinners, and therefore are not worthy of marriage.**

Not all religions hold that entire classes of people are sinners. Even if one believes that they were automatically sinners, state laws provide, and high courts have ruled that sinners, such as murderers, convicted felons, wife-beaters, and adulterers — even if they are in prison — have the constitutional right to marry. Again, civil marriage laws are not defined by a few select churches.

### **Same-sex marriage would threaten the institution of marriage.**

That one's contradictory right on the face of it. Threaten marriage? By allowing people to marry? That doesn't sound very logical to me. If you allow gay people to marry each other in essence you are reducing the number of marriages that end up in the divorce courts. If it is the institution of heterosexual marriage that worries you, then consider that no one would require you or anyone else to participate in a gay marriage. So you would have freedom of choice, of choosing what kind of marriage to participate in -- something more than what you have now. And speaking of divorce -- to argue that the institution of marriage is worth preserving at the cost of requiring involuntary participants to remain in it is a better argument for tightening divorce laws than proscribing gay marriage.

### **Marriage is a “heterosexual” institution.**

This is morally the weakest argument. Slavery was also a traditional institution, based on traditions that went back to the very beginnings of human history. But by the 19th century, humankind had realized the evils of that institution and has since largely abolished it. Why not recognize the truth -- that there is no moral ground to support the strictly heterosexual institution tradition of marriage?

### **Marriage is patriarchal.**

There is nothing inherently patriarchal — or even heterosexual — about legal marriage. Contemporary state marriage laws are largely blind to the sex of a couple. No longer — as in Biblical days — do males own females and their children; and he is no longer allowed to treat them as slaves.

What some perceive as sex-role stereotyping in marriage has nothing to do with marriage per se. It is a reflection of social attitudes, which attribute behaviors selectively according to a person's sex.

These stereotypes fall apart when considering a couple of the same sex; they cannot follow the old role models. This shift in roles may be the real, underlying threat for those who wish males to continue to dominate.

The arguments against gay marriage obviously don't hold up to close scrutiny. So let's get over our aversion to what we oppose for silly, irrational reasons, based on ignorance and faulty assumptions, and make ours a more honorable society, finally honoring that last phrase from the Pledge of Allegiance; "With liberty and justice for all."